

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2185

As Reported by House Committee On:
Technology, Energy & Communications

Title: An act relating to encouraging the use of solar water heating systems by retail customers of light and power businesses and gas companies.

Brief Description: Concerning solar water heating systems.

Sponsors: Representatives McCoy and Chase.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Technology, Energy & Communications: 2/18/09 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows electric or gas utilities to offer a rebate to customers for up to 75 percent of the cost of installing a solar water heating system.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TECHNOLOGY, ENERGY & COMMUNICATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 15 members: Representatives McCoy, Chair; Crouse, Ranking Minority Member; Haler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Carlyle, Condotta, Finn, Hasegawa, Herrera, Hinkle, Hudgins, Jacks, McCune, Morris, Takko and Van De Wege.

Staff: Kara Durbin (786-7133)

Background:

Solar hot water heaters use the sun to heat either water or a heat-transfer fluid in collectors. The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that a typical solar hot water system will reduce the need for conventional water heating by about two-thirds.

Summary of Bill:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Starting on August 1, 2009, an electric or gas utility may provide a rebate to its retail customers for the costs of installing solar water heating systems in their homes or businesses. The amount of the rebate cannot be greater than 75 percent of the total cost for the solar water heating system. Participating utilities must determine a tiered rebate amount based on the efficiency of the solar water heating system. At a minimum, a solar water heating system must have a solar rating and certification corporation certification as of July 1, 2009.

Rebates are limited to \$5,000 per calendar year for each customer.

An electric or gas utility may establish a grant program to assist its retail customers in installing solar water heating systems in their homes or businesses, provided that state or federal funds are appropriated for this purpose.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill is a good alternative to Substitute House Bill 1134 (SHB 1134). Unlike SHB 1134, this bill does not contain the public utility tax credit provisions. Removing these tax provisions helps us avoid having a fiscal impact slow down the policy part of the bill.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative McCoy, prime sponsor.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.